

# Male Condom

and women may be embarrassed to suggest or initiate using condoms because they perceive condom use implies a lack of trust or intimacy. To be effective, condoms must be used every time, so some planning ahead is necessary.

## Potential risks:

No known health risks.

## Where can you get male condoms?

Condoms are available without a prescription at many locations: drug stores, school health clinics, Planned Parenthood, public health department clinics, community service offices (CSOs), community health clinics, etc.

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## How the male condom works:

The condom is a thin sheath that fits over the erect penis. It works as a barrier to stop sperm from getting into the vagina. It offers protection against pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections.

Condoms are made from latex (often called "rubbers"), natural membrane (lambskin) or plastic (polyurethane).

## How to use the male condom:

### BEFORE:

- Have several condoms on hand in case the first one is damaged or torn.
- Store condoms in a cool, dry place and out of direct sunlight.
- Discuss condom use with your partner before sexual activity begins.
- Check for expiration date on each condom before use.

### AT THE TIME OF:

- Open the condom package carefully.
- Check to see that you are holding the condom so it will unroll the right way with the rolled ring on the outside.



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- Put the condom on before the penis touches the partner's genitals.
- Unroll the condom down the entire length of the penis, squeezing the tip to remove air. Many condoms come with a "reservoir tip."
- Adequate lubrication is important. For latex condoms, use only water-based lubricants like water, K-Y jelly, spermicidal creams, jellies, foam, etc.
- If the condom breaks or comes off during sex but before ejaculation, stop and put on a new condom.

#### AFTER:

- Soon after ejaculation, withdraw the penis while it is still hard. Hold the condom firmly against the base of the penis to prevent slippage and leakage of semen.
- Check the condom for visible damage or leakage.
- Throw it away (don't flush it!).

#### REPEAT sexual intercourse:

- Use a new condom from "start to finish" with each act of anal, vaginal, or oral sex. Do not reuse condoms.

### Effectiveness rates:

If a condom is used every time of sexual intercourse and always used the correct way (perfect use), the effectiveness rate is as high as 97%. Because men and women do not use a condom every time or the condom slips, breaks or is put on or taken off incorrectly, the typical use effectiveness is 86% or lower; 14 women out of 100 could become pregnant within the first year of use.

Condom use becomes more effective with practice. Many people try different brands or types before finding the condom that is most comfortable. Some couples make putting on the condom a part of lovemaking.

Condoms are also more effective if used along with a vaginal spermicide, such as contraceptive foam.

If a condom breaks or slips, emergency contraception can be used to prevent pregnancy if taken within 72 hours. Call 1-888-NOT-2-LATE to learn more about emergency contraception and to find your local provider.

### Benefits of the condom:

Condoms (latex and polyurethane) are safe and effective for preventing pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV. Because of the STI protection, condoms decrease the chance of infertility. You have immediate, visible proof of effectiveness when ejaculate is contained within the condom. Condoms are inexpensive and easily available from many sources, and easy to carry discreetly. Some users report sexual enhancement (i.e., longer-lasting erections). There are few side effects; if you or your partner have a latex allergy, you can switch to polyurethane condoms.

### Potential side effects or disadvantages:

Some people are allergic to latex (rubber). Some users complain that condoms reduce sensitivity or interrupt lovemaking. Some users cannot consistently maintain an erection during condom use. Some men and women may be embarrassed to obtain condoms from a drug store or health clinic. Some men

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